

REMARKS

By this amendment, claims 4 and 16 through are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and claims 1, 5, 6 and 11 are currently amended, leaving claims 1 through 3 and 5 through 15 pending. Care has been taken to avoid introduction of new matter. Favorable reconsideration of the application as now amended is respectfully solicited.

The final Office Action dated November 30, 2006 rejected claims 1 through 3, 10, 12 and 17 through 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by either U.S. patent 5,842,740 (Lefranc) or Kain of record. Claims 13 through 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over either Lefranc or Kain in view of either U.S. published application 2001/0011838 (Kassai) or U.S. patent 6,234,572 (Shiino). Objection was made to claim 16 for recitation of subject matter not illustrated in the drawings.

Claims 4 through 9, 11 and 16 stand under objection for their dependencies from rejected parent claim 1. These claims have been indicated to be allowable subject to presentation in appropriate independent form.

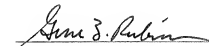
In response, independent claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of now cancelled dependent claim 4. Claims 5, 6 and 11 have been amended to change their dependencies from now cancelled claim 4 to claim 1. Claims 16 through 20 have been cancelled.

As claim 1, as amended herein, now contains all requirements of claim 4, and all remaining claims are dependent from claim 1, it is submitted that the objection and rejections of record have been overcome. Entry of the amendment and allowance of the application are respectfully solicited. If any unresolved issues remain, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone the undersigned attorney at (703) 519-9951 so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

Respectfully Submitted,

DITTHAVONG MORI & STEINER, P.C.

2/26/07
Date


Gene Z. Robinson
Attorney/Agent for Applicant(s)
Reg. No. 33,351

918 Prince Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
Tel. (703) 519-9951
Fax. (703) 519-9958